

In the claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A system for the exchange of electronic data for optimizing a processing chain and/or a management chain for producing agricultural products between a plurality of users comprising:

users operable as both a provider and a receiver of information

at least one user functioning as a receiver and at least one user functioning as a provider;

a data exchange network; and

a central data memory

wherein:

said receiver generates question postings which are transmitted to the provider and receives results from the provider and

said provider generates results in the form of a service in response to the question postings and transmits said results directly and/or via the central data memory to said receiver without any further instructions from the receiver, for optimizing the processing chain and/or the management chain for producing agricultural products.

Claim 2 cancelled.

3. (previously presented) The system as defined in claim 1, wherein provider groups identify themselves as services that are accessible to said at least one user.

4. (previously presented) The system as defined in claim 1, wherein said provider defines access rights to said service.

5. (currently amended) The system as defined in claim 1, wherein said provider transmits said results in ~~timely manner~~ and other users edit said results to provide information beyond the question posted by the receiver.

Claim 6 cancelled.

7. (previously presented) The system as defined in claim 1, wherein said results generated by said provider comprises referring to at least one other result generated by least one other provider and/or sub-service providers.

8. (previously presented) The system as defined in claim 1, wherein said service of said provider is permanently or temporarily connected as need requires to said receiver generating said question postings.

9. (previously presented) The system as defined in claim 1, wherein said service of said provider provides additional information that is not expressly required by said receiver, which increases service quality provided by said provider.

10. (previously presented ) The system as defined in claim 9, wherein said provider providing said service obtains said additional information by retrieving said additional information from another service provided by another service provider.

11. (previously presented) The system as defined in claim 1, wherein services of a plurality of service providers are made available to said receiver by said provider and/or a selection of said services is made available to said receiver by a number of different service providers.

12. (previously presented) The system as defined in claim 1, wherein said provider is a stationary unit or a mobile unit and communicates via said at least one data exchange system with said receiver and/or said provider.

13. (previously presented) The system as defined in claim 1, wherein said provider and said receiver alternately exchange said required information by means of said data exchange network.

14. (previously presented) The system as defined in claim 13, wherein said data exchange network is global or spatially limited.

15. (previously presented) The system as defined in claim 12, wherein said stationary unit or said mobile unit have sensors for generating receiver-specific information, and said receiver-specific information is made available to at least one service provider and/or at least one further receiver by means of said data exchange network.

16. (previously presented) The system as defined in claim 1, wherein said question postings and results generated by said users in said data exchange network is generated in a standardized format.

17. (previously presented ) The system as defined in claim 1, wherein said users comprise machines and/or businesses engaged in planting, caring for, harvesting, storing and/or processing of agricultural products; machine manufacturers; weather services; crop advisory services and planting.

18. (currently amended) A method of communication between a plurality of users of at least one data exchange system in which each of said users operates as both a server and a receiver of information for optimizing a

processing chain and/or a management chain for producing agricultural products, said method comprising the steps of:

a) producing answers in response to question postings by at least one receiver in at least one user of at least one data transmission network according to specific standards, said at least one user functioning as said server; and

b) picking up said answers by at least one other user of said at least one data transmission network and/or editing the required information generated by said at least one user, adjusted according to needs of said at least one other user, said at least one other user functioning as said receiver, for optimizing the processing chain and/or the management chain for producing agricultural products.

19. (Previously Presented) The method as defined in claim 18, further comprising making said answers, adjusted according to said needs of said at least one other user, available to said at least one other user in the form of a service of said server.

20. (Original) The method as defined in claim 19, wherein said server defines access rights to said service.

21. (currently amended) The method as defined in claim 19, wherein said server makes said required information available ~~in timely manner~~ as part of said service and makes said required information matched to said requirements of said at least one other user available to said at least one other user in a timely manner.

Claim 22 cancelled.

23. (Previously Presented) The method as defined in claim 18, wherein said server refers to at least one other server and/or to sub-service providers to obtain necessary information for answering said question postings.

24. (Previously Presented) The method as defined in claim 18, further comprising providing additional information to said receiver from said service of said server that is not expressly required by said receiver, in order to increase service quality provided by said server.

25. (original) The method as defined in claim 24, wherein said server providing said service obtains said additional information by retrieving said additional information from another service provided by another service provider.

26. (new) The system as defined in claim 1; and further comprising means for remote diagnostic monitoring for machines by respective manufactures.

27. (new) The system as defined in claim 1; and further comprising means for providing weather predictions for planning a use of harvesting machines.

28. (new) The system as defined in claim 1; and further comprising means for providing information for operators of drying plants for planning drying and storage capacity.

29. (new) The system as defined in claim 1; and further comprising means for providing a data exchange between harvesting machines.

30. (new) The system as defined in claim 1; and further comprising means for providing information about product properties and conditions of products to be processed.

31. (new) The system as defined in claim 1; and further comprising means selected from the group consisting of means for remote diagnostic monitoring for machines by respective manufactures, means for providing weather predictions for planning a use of harvesting machines, means for providing information for operators of drying plants for planning drying and storage capacity, means for providing a data exchange between harvesting machines, and means for providing information about product properties and conditions of products to be processed.

32. (new) The method as defined in claim 18; and further comprising performing remote diagnostic monitoring for machines by respective manufactures.

33. (new) The method as defined in claim 18; and further comprising providing weather predictions for planning a use of harvesting machines.

34. (new) The method as defined in claim 18; and further comprising providing information for operators of drying plants for planning drying and storage capacity.

35. (new) The method as defined in claim 18; and further comprising providing a data exchange between harvesting machines.

36. (new) The method as defined in claim 18; and further comprising providing information about product properties and conditions of products to be processed.

37. (new) The method as defined in claim 1; and further comprising the steps selected from the group consisting of performing remote diagnostic monitoring for machines by respective manufactures, providing weather predictions for planning a use of harvesting machines, providing information for operators of drying plants for planning drying and storage capacity, providing a data exchange between harvesting machines, and providing information about product properties and conditions of products to be processed.